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# STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

# CORPORATE DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE U.S. ARMY?

BY

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CORPORATE DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE U.S. ARMY?

by

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#### ABSTRACT

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Racial, ethnic, and gender issues within America's work places still exist today and look to be more prominent early into the next century. Corporate America is attempting to address, in a new way, these issues in light of a growing minority and women representation in the U.S. work force. This new approach is called diversity management.

America's Army is not immune to many of the same minority and women issues facing Corporate America. Accordingly, the new diversity initiatives merit the Army's serious attention and consideration for possible new Army leadership strategies for ensuring and enhancing an equal opportunity-based organization. An examination of the implications of diversity management for the U.S. Army will assist Army equal opportunity proponents and senior leadership in moving the organization to perhaps a more color-blind and gender neutral one.

#### Introduction

"...form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity..."

Preamble, U.S. Constitution

"...all men are **created equal**; that they are endowed by their creator with certain **inalienable rights**; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of **happiness**..."

The Declaration of Independence

For well over two centuries these words have served as cornerstones for democracy, freedom, and equality in America. In the case of the Constitution's Preamble, its words provide "a visible and enduring common bond between the diverse people of this great Nation." However, despite our country's sustained attempts to live up to these noble words, the actual achievement of true equality for all Americans still escapes us today.

Racial, ethnic, and gender issues within American society still divide us. One has only to read the newspaper, listen to the radio, watch television, or experience first hand to gain an appreciation of the dividing issues which plagues us. Racism, discrimination, prejudice, sexism, and group extremism are but a few of society's ills which preclude the realization of equality in a "diverse" America as envisioned in the above words of the Constitution and a past President. Recent and commonly known events suggest we still have plenty of work ahead to resolve the dividing issues. For example, the O.J. Simpson trial virtually polarized Black and White America along racial lines on the fairness of the criminal justice and jury systems. The Million

Man March divided both Black and White America on the issue of social justice for Black Americans. Extremist and hate groups targeting hate, anger, and violence toward minorities have been acted out on numerous deadly occasions. Sexual harassment incidents abound from alleged and substantiated cases involving the U.S. Navy's Tailhook and confirmation hearings of Supreme Court Justice Thomas to even allegations against President Clinton.

So what? What does all this mean? It means that we as Americans and a Nation have still a very hard job ahead to reach a desired end state consistent with our founding document--an enduring color-blind and gender-neutral society. One important segment of our society which is struggling to address this problem is that of Corporate America. In it's quest for new alternatives to making the diverse American work place a fairer environment for all employees to work and succeed, Corporate America is attempting to change current paradigms through what is generally called "diversity management."

The purpose of this paper is to examine Corporate America's new diversity management concepts, initiatives, and lessons learned to determine if there are any implications or applicability for the U.S. Army. While the Army is often thought of as a leading institution for valuing diversity in its work force, it can benefit from differing approaches to the problems and challenges of a diverse labor force from which it fills its ranks. More importantly, the U.S. Army is not immune to many of

the same minority and women issues that Corporate America faces in light of a growing minority and female work force. One has only to recall the recent White extremist group incident at Fort Bragg, North Carolina which resulted in White soldiers harassing and murdering a Black couple for just being Black to know that the Army still has a job to do in promoting and ensuring racial tolerance and respect for the differences in soldiers.

In short, Corporate America's new diversity initiatives merit the Army's serious attention and consideration for possible new leadership strategies for addressing minority and women issues as the Army enters the 21st century. Why is this important to do? Because the security and "common defense" of the Nation and the winning of its wars are dependent upon a ready and capable Army. And a ready and capable Army is in turn dependent upon dedicated soldiers who work effectively as a team and institutional systems which value and reward the talents of all soldiers regardless of race, ethnicity, and gender. will be of continuing importance to the Army in the next century due to two basic assumptions of this paper. First, that soldiers will remain the most important, valued asset of the Army and second, that racism and sexism and prejudice and discrimination will continue to exist and challenge the Army well into the 21st century and beyond.

## Diversity Management: Key Terms and Concepts

Diversity management is a relatively new term in Corporate

America. Roosevelt R. Thomas, Jr., a leading spokesperson on diversity, defines it as "a comprehensive managerial process for developing an environment that works for all employees."2 The environment, of course, is the American work place in which, generally, the mix of employees is diverse in terms of minority groups and women. However, Thomas, in his book Beyond Race and Gender, further defines diversity as extending past race and sex to include employee differences by age, education, sexual preference, disability, geographic origin, and even tenure with the organization and management or non-management status.3 This expanded definition of diversity in the work force, as literature review indicates, appears to be generally accepted within Corporate America. Major companies have developed definitional phrases unique to their respective organizations. For example, General Electric's definition states that "diversity concerns understanding that the work force will include people who are different and a comprehensive process for developing and maintaining a workplace environment that results in the full utilization of all employees."4 Where as Kraft General Foods defines diversity simply as "understanding, respecting, and celebrating our differences."5

Corporate opinions vary slightly on what the "comprehensive managerial process" is in implementing diversity management.

According to Ben Harrison, President of an Oakland, Calif.-based diversity management consultant firm, diversity management consists of three components--valuing differences, managing

diversity, and equal employment opportunity/affirmative action. Valuing differences centers on the individual and interpersonal levels of awareness and respect for the differences in people. Those differences may include race, gender, religion, language, and sexual orientation. Managing diversity focuses on initiatives at the organization level to address the diverse quality of employee needs such as child care, family leave, and flexible holiday periods. Equal employment opportunity and affirmative action involves laws that guide or mandate recruitment and promotion. 6 Thomas goes further to suggest that the three components described by Harrison are in fact three paradigms needed to change corporate cultures to be supportive of diversity management--something missing from earlier approaches to diversity. Thomas' chart at figure 1 is a helpful glance at contrasting the differences in the goals, motives, focuses, and challenges among the three paradigms that define approaches to difference on the job.

Figure 1. "Comparative Analysis.

	Affirmative Action		Managing Diversity
Goal	Creation	Creation	Mgt of diverse workforce
Motive	Upward Mobility	Quality interpersonal relationships	Full uitili- zation of human resources
Focus	Legal, moral, and social responsibility	Exploitation of richness from diversity	Attainment of competitive advantage
Challenges	Artificial Creates backlash	Low emphasis on systems & cultur	Long term res commitment Requires mindset shift Requires adaptation by both indiv & org"8

## Origins and Acceptance in Corporate America

Diversity management in the corporate and business sector came into being due to several reasons. The more significant ones include radical demographic forecasts and the globalization of the U.S. economy. The most quoted authoritative document on the subject of forecasting the increase in diversity in the U.S. work force was a 1987 study by the Hudson Institute, a private and non-profit research organization contracted by the U.S. Employment Standards Administration. The study entitled Work Force 2000 projected starling demographic changes in the labor force that made corporate America take notice. Corporate America

and industry were alarmed and jolted into action to re-think its approach to meeting the needs of the new work force projected for the 21st century. The study predicted that by the year 2000 the labor force would shrink and grow more slowly, workers would become older, and there would be a significant rise in the number of minorities and women in the labor force. Of particular significance would be that only 15 percent of the new entrants to the labor force between 1987 and 2000 would be native white males compared to a 47 percent representation of that category in 1987. In other words, what this study told corporate America was that by the year 2000, minorities would represent 85 percent of new workers entering the work force. Minorities in the study included Blacks, Hispanics, Women, and ethnic-different immigrants, legal and illegal.

Corporate executives saw a need for diversity to gain and maintain competitiveness in domestic and global markets. By the 1990's, many U.S companies had entered foreign markets and some found their percentage of earnings from abroad growing to over 50 percent. And domestically, the demographics of the U.S market place is rapidly changing as well. The spending power of Blacks, Hispanics, and Asian Americans together was estimated at \$424 billion in 1990 and is expected to reach \$650 billion by the year 2000. Vaughn Bryson, president and CEO, Eli Lilley and Company, a global research-based corporation, had this to say:

As we look at our customer today--and consider their likely profile in the future--we find that they're increasingly diverse. They represent a vast variety of cultures, traditions, beliefs, races, nationalities, skills, experiences, and ages. Only by

developing a similar range of diversity within the company can we meet the varied needs of this customer base--and meet them more effectively than our competitors can. 13

A growing number of corporate executives are recognizing the importance of diversity. According to a 1991 American Society for Training and Development survey of human resource directors for Fortune 1000 companies, "73 percent of respondents indicated that diversity issues were receiving attention, ranging from high priority (11 percent) to moderate attention (29 percent) and 'just beginning to look' (33 percent)."14 In another 1991 survey, Towers Perrin, a New York-based consulting firm, showed a growing concern for diversity issues as well. The survey indicated that more than half (55 percent) of the corporate respondents stated management support for programs targeted at managing the changing work force had increased over the past two years. Forty one percent of the respondents reported that the level of management support was the same as it had been two years Additionally, a 1991 Harris survey of 406 companies earlier. indicated that "almost two-thirds of the companies participating in the survey conducted diversity training for its managers. And almost 40 percent conducted such training for all employees. 15

However, diversity management has its critics as well. Some see it as a ploy by highly credentialed professionals to gain a lucrative business in consulting and diversity training seminars and workshops. Badi Foster, president of the AETNA Institute for Corporate Education, is not too optimistic about corporate America's progress regarding diversity. He comments:

The word [diversity] continues to be bandied around, but when you look at the numbers of people of diverse backgrounds in management structures you're seeing fewer in positions of influence. As organizations downsize, right size, restructure, and re-engineer, the unintended consequences appears to be less diversity in the management ranks. Bottom-line pressures are taking precedence over building a work force for the future.<sup>17</sup>

Ann M. Morrison, author of the book <u>The New Leaders:</u>

<u>Guidelines on Leadership Diversity in America</u>, provides several reasons for a lack of responsiveness to work force demographics by some companies. Several reasons include more interest in the hear and now and not worry about the future, more immediate and pressing problems, assumption that diverse groups will be incorporated into the bottom ranks of the organization and white men still incorporated in upper-level jobs, and that many executives will retire before 2000. Additionally, white "backlash" or "resistance" by white male workers is cited as a major problem.

#### Diversity Management Examples

Notable business companies which have incorporated diversity management programs and initiatives include Prudential Insurance, General Electric, Digital, Xerox, Dupont, General Mills, Avon, Amoco, Kraft General Foods, and 3M. Amoco has established a Black employee network to address Black employee issues and concerns and a diversity advisory council chaired by Amoco's CEO. It also provides minority scholarship for recruitment purposes. Eli Lilly and Company and Kraft General Foods both have established diversity councils and Kraft has also established regional task forces to address local diversity issues.<sup>20</sup> Avon

has implemented awareness training for its employees, diversity training program for managers, formed multi-cultural participation groups, and helped minority groups form networks in the company nationwide. 21 Xerox's diversity program consists of 1-to-2 day seminars, affinity groups, minority mentoring, and succession planning which identifies and prepares minority employees with demonstrated potential for jobs at the next higher level. Xerox managers' compensation packages are also tied to performances in meeting diversity goals.22 Digital has had a valuing differences program since 1985. Aside from 4-hours-permonth training for core groups and celebrating cultural observances throughout the year, Digital's program approach involves five key steps. They include stripping away stereotypes, learning to listen and probe for the differences in people's assumptions, building authentic relationships with people one regards as different, enhancing personal empowerment, and exploring and identifying group differences.<sup>23</sup> There readily appears upon review of several company programs that there is no consistency in the types of diversity programs established or in the extent of implementation within corporate America. companies do much more than others while some do nothing at all. According to a recent survey by the American Management Association, smaller companies tend to do better at diversity than larger ones with 500 or more employees. Smaller companies tend to have a higher average of minority employees in management positions. Only one-third of small company respondents indicated

that minorities were overlooked for promotions while almost three-quarters of respondents at larger companies reported a lack of promotions.<sup>24</sup>

## Corporate and Army Approaches: Significant Similarities

There are several significant similarities between what the corporate sector calls diversity management and the Army's equal opportunity program. However, literature review reveals that the Army is much farther along in institutionalizing equal opportunity in its day-to-day activities than most private sector companies. This is readily apparent when one considers that in corporate America "diversity suffers from a lower priority level ascribed to it than other major issues facing management, including profitability, market share, capital investment, health care, quality management, revising compensation, restructuring, downsizing, and training."<sup>25</sup>

Major similarities include the general thrust and purpose of addressing diversity, management commitment, employee and management training, diversity initiatives, and the importance of organizational culture. The general thrust and purpose for both the Army and the corporate sector in addressing diversity in the organization is to provide equal opportunity, fairness, and equity for their employees regardless of race, color, ethnicity, gender, or religion. Cordell Reed, senior vice president, Diversity Office of Commomwealth Edison, comments that in the corporate sector "diversity management focuses on upward mobility and assures that the effective use of the work force is not

limited by race, gender, or any other characteristic not related to ability."26 This is usually spelled out in the corporate sector as written policy. For example, Eli Lilley and Company and Kraft General Foods have formally stated diversity policies.27 Other organizations such as Apple, Avon, Digital, Dupont, Hughes, and others have made work force diversity an "explicit corporate goal." Others have also tied diversity to business objectives in staying competitive in the market economy. The Army is very similar in that it addresses diversity through its equal opportunity and affirmative action programs. It has published policies on all soldiers being treated with fairness, justice, and equity. Army Regulation 600-20 states that the "equal opportunity program formulates, directs, and sustains a comprehensive effort to ensure fair treatment of all soldiers based solely on merit, fitness, capability, and potential..."29 Army Pamphlet 600-26 establishes specific affirmative action plans, goals and objectives. 30 The programs are also tied to the Army's "business" objectives--unit readiness and mission accomplishment. This is an area in terms of stated policy that the Army far exceeds that found in the private sector.

Although there appears to be more emphasis in the Army than in most private sector companies, both the civilian advocates of diversity management and the Army see management commitment as crucial to the success of any diversity program. The Army makes it a "responsibility of leadership and function of command" at just about every command level of organization within the Army. 31

Digital Corporation is only one of a few companies which has some similarity to the level of commitment that the Army demonstrates. Digital has had a diversity program since 1985, long before it was popular to do so. However, diversity specialist, Kay Iwata's comment that "too often organizations roll out education and awareness programs with little, if any, leadership commitment" suggests that commitment to diversity in corporate America may not be so wide spread. Management accountability for diversity initiatives and objectives is beginning to surface in the private sector. Some companies are beginning to tie diversity performance (i.e, achievement of hiring goals) of management personnel to compensation packages and performance appraisals. The Army has long since made officer and non-commissioned officer evaluations reflective of equal opportunity support and adherence.

Some similarities in diversity training appear in the way the Army and corporate training programs are implemented. Both organizations train their employees at the individual, interpersonal, and organizational levels. Periodic awareness training is conducted to promote effective intercultural communication. Both appoint designated officials within the organization to be responsible for the conduct of diversity training. Most corporate individuals are called diversity coordinators which may or may not be a full time job. The corporate sector also uses to a greater extent professional consultants as experts for employee and management training

sessions. The Army trainers are either full time personnel, school-trained equal opportunity advisors (EOAs) down to brigade level or additional duty personnel at the battalion and company level serving as equal opportunity representatives (EORs).35

Diversity initiatives such as minority recruitment, retention and promotion exists in both private sector companies and the Army. Army policy supports established equal opportunity goals which seek to increase under represented groups through its affirmative action process. However, for soldier protection "soldiers are not assessed, classified, trained, assigned, promoted, or otherwise managed on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, or national origin." Other diversity initiatives such as recognition of yearly special/ethnic observances and programs offered to meet the diverse needs of employees such as day care, flextime, maternity leave, language training, flexible holiday leave, etc. exists in both the corporate and Army communities.

For the most part, advocates of diversity management in the private sector and the Army view organizational culture as having a major influence on the success or failure of diversity in the work place. Private sector diversity advocates "emphasize the need for changing organizational culture rather than trying to change people to fit the culture." Thomas asserts that organizational "core" cultures must be modified to support both new and old diversity paradigms to include affirmative action, valuing differences, and managing diversity. Acknowledging

Edgar H. Schein's, a noted organizational psychologist, definition of corporate culture as "the basic assumptions [deep rooted and unexamined] driving life in a given organization," Thomas views managing diversity as a process to determine which organizational culture roots hinder the aspirations of diversity. He adds that once determined, the roots of organizational corporate culture that serve as obstacles should be modified or changed. 39 The Army leads the private sector in adjusting its culture to imbed equal opportunity to promote fairness and justice throughout its ranks. Army values place importance upon fair play and the respect for soldier differences. Traditional Army values of courage, integrity, candor, competence, commitment, loyalty, selfless service, personal responsibility, and duty combine to make the Army institutional culture open to the aspiration of diversity in the military service. 40 The Army's values are derived from the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence and do include fair treatment for all regardless of race, gender, religion, or national origin.41

### Corporate and Army Approaches: Significant Differences

Just as there are similarities, there are also key differences in corporate America and Army approaches to making the work environment "work" for all employees. Key differences include treatment of the expanded definition of minority, affinity group training, racial/ethnic group networks, mentoring, and training concepts.

As explained earlier, most organizations in corporate

America view and treat minorities as including not only Blacks,

Hispanics, other ethnic groups, and women, but also disabled

employees, gays, and lesbians. Sexual orientation is viewed as a

diverse characteristic in the work force. Additionally, there

are no formal barriers excluding women from specific occupational

jobs or professions in private business and industry. However,

this is not the case for the U.S. Army. Although there are

provisions for the employment of handicapped and disabled

employees as Department of the Army Civilians under the Equal

Employment Opportunity Program, current Army policy restricts the

role of women in the Army and prohibits the accession of

homosexuals.

In a 1992 Presidential Commission report on the assignment of women in the armed forces, the commission members nearly voted unanimously on a recommendation "that women should be excluded from direct land combat units and positions...and that the existing service policies concerning direct combat exclusions be coded." Army Regulation 600-13 prescribes current Army policy and a position coding system for the assigning of female soldiers in the U.S. Army. The overall policy for the female soldier "allows women to serve in any officer or enlisted specialty or position except in those specialties, positions, or units (battalion size or smaller) which are assigned a routine mission to engage in direct combat, or which collocate routinely with units assigned a direct combat mission."

Current Army policy precludes either the commissioning and enlisting of homosexuals or the retention of "discovered and practicing" homosexuals. Recent debate over the Clinton administration's attempt to lift the military ban was widespread. However, only a compromise was effected by the administration—the "don't ask, don't tell" policy. Discovered and proven or admitted gays and lesbians are discharged from the military service. This is not the case in the private and public sector; that is , any formal policy for denial of employment for homosexuals.

It is not uncommon for some private sector companies to conduct "affinity" group training for management and employee personnel. Affinity groups generally mean the training of selected or targeted minority groups-groups having a similar characteristic. For example, Corning Glass, whose educational and training program is considered typical, provides a four-anda-half-day racial diversity course for supervisors of Black employees and a separate course of the same duration for the company's Black employees. 46 The Xerox Corporation has a similar training program. This awareness training approach is quite different from that of the Army. Racial, gender, or ethnic groups are never divided up for separate training nor are supervisors trained on any one minority group. Army equal opportunity policy specifically forbids the training of soldiers and their leaders, military or civilian, on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, or national origin. 47 Only a very

remote connection to this corporate concept exists wherein the Army provides training for Department of the Army civilian supervisors of military personnel and training for military supervisors of Department of the Army civilian personnel. Again, no segregation as to race or gender is involved.

Another diversity approach by corporate America that is starkly different from that of the Army is the use of formalized minority employee, group networks. Many private companies have, not unlike Avon, Amoco, and Kraft General Foods, established nationwide minority group networks to address local diversity issues. Amoco, for example has an Amoco Black Employee Network (ABEN). The effectiveness of such programs to enhancing diversity in the work place is uncertain. Barbara Walker, manager of international diversity at Digital, points this out when she comments that "it is difficult, if not impossible, to quantify the connection between the valuing difference program and the company's productivity."48 A drawback for affinity training and minority group networks is suggested by Stephan Kliment, author of an Architectural Record article entitled "Managing Diversity." He asserts that "perhaps the greatest danger in managing diversity is to typecast by race, gender, or some other yardstick. That surely is discrimination of the worst kind. What we need is the basic awareness, by management and staff alike, that no two individuals are alike."49 The Army has chosen to stay clear of such minority group networks.

Use of mentors for minority employees in the private sector

is a diversity initiative that companies have begun to explore. Most managing diversity guidelines recommend minority and women mentorship as a formal way to increase diversity in the management pool. Xerox corporation has implemented a "succession planning" program in which high potential minorities and women are prepared for jobs at the next higher level. Although, leader mentorship of subordinates is expected in the Army, there is no formalized mentoring of any specific groups. However, this might be an area that merits further attention and study by the Army--a further examination of existing program and possible implementation of a more rigorous mentoring program at junior noncommissioned officer and company grade, commissioned officer levels for all enlisted and officer personnel of this category.

Diversity training is another initiative that many organizations in the corporate sector use in their efforts to value and manage diversity. The basic training concept involves two models--awareness-based and skill-based diversity training. The two approaches are interrelated but do have differences. Awareness-based diversity training "aims at heightening awareness of diversity issues and revealing workers' unexamined assumptions and tendencies to stereotype." This training is primarily cognitive. It includes such training techniques as statistical presentations to show the business necessity for diversity, providing information on different group cultures, and experiential exercises to uncover unconscious cultural assumptions and biases. These exercises "encourage trainees to

view others as individuals rather than as representatives of a group, and thus to avoid stereotyping. The objectives of awareness-based diversity training include providing information about diversity, assessing attitudes and values, correcting myths and stereotypes, and fostering individual and group sharing.

Skill-based diversity training differs in that it is primarily behavioral. This training is intended to provide "tools to promote effective interaction in a heterogeneous work setting"--cross-cultural understanding, intercultural communication, facilitation skills, and flexibility or adaptability. The objectives of skills-based diversity training include building new diversity-interaction skills, reinforcing existing skills, and inventorying skill-building methodologies.

Both approaches are viewed by other diversity training experts as incorporating competencies in organizations to bring about and maintain environments conducive to diversity. The competencies are centered along three dimensions: beliefs and attitudes, knowledge, and skills. However, the execution of awareness and skills-based diversity training in the corporate sector appears to be haphazard. A lesson learned is that training is unlikely to be effective when companies approach it on a one time-basis versus on a sustained basis with follow-up activities to evaluate training. Most corporate training is conducted by outside professional diversity consultants.

In contrast, the Army's equivalent to diversity training,

equal opportunity/sexual harassment training, is 1. mandatory for all unit soldiers and conducted on a semi-annual basis, 2. taught at institutional training courses (e.g., from officer basic and advance and enlisted basic and noncommissioned officer basic and advance courses to sergeants major academy and senior service college), 3. documented, 4. interactive and discussion-based, 5. focused on informational, compliance, and awareness type topics, and 6. conducted by in-house, full-time, and school-trained equal opportunity advisors and locally-trained, additional duty unit equal opportunity representatives.

## Army Implications?

In an Army that is as diverse if not more diverse than any company or corporation in American private business and industry, the current demographic diversity will increase as the Army enters the 21st century. Department of the Army racial and gender statistics as of September 1995 showed that minorities in the total active Army represent a little over 38 percent of the total force. Minorities included Blacks (27%), Hispanics (5.4), American Indian/Alaskan Native (0.5%), Asian/Pacific Islander (1.8), and other unknown (3.6%). Total female soldiers represented approximately 13.4 percent of the total force. While by this data Whites make up only 81.15 percent of the commissioned officer corps (excluding warrant officers) and 58.08 percent of the enlisted corps, they represent nearly 91 percent of the general officers, just over 98 percent of full colonels, and nearly 61 percent of the highest noncommissioned officer

grade, E9. In contrast, Blacks (not hispanics) represent 11.19 percent of the commissioned officers and 30.06 percent of the enlisted force. However, they represent 7.72 percent of general officers, 5.27 percent of full colonels, and 28.50 percent of the highest enlisted grade, E9. Additionally, women, regardless of race, represent 14.45 percent of total commissioned officers, but only 1.01 percent of general officers and 5.52 percent of full colonels. In the enlisted ranks, women, again regardless of race, account for 13.45 percent, but represent only 3.44 percent of the highest enlisted grade, E9.

These statistics might suggest a closer and continual examination of why minority and women representation at the senior officer level and women representation at the senior enlisted level exist in the low numbers that they do. The point here without benefit of further detailed analysis as to "why so" is the fact that diversity issues are and will be an important issue for the Army as the American labor pool grows more diverse in minorities and women.

Corporate America's approach to diversity management, despite its newness, still yet to be proven concepts, and substantial differences to that of the Army's approach still suggest some implications for the Army.

The Army as an Institution. Although widely recognized that the Army has led the country in race relations, it can ill afford to rest on its laurels as the American workforce from which it fills its ranks grows more diverse as we enter the 21st century.

Like corporate America in its attempt to enhance equal opportunity by valuing differences, managing diversity initiatives, and recognizing the need for a supportive organizational culture, the Army will need to sustain a continuous process of improving and enhancing equal opportunity and equal employment opportunity for soldiers and DA civilians alike. Army values, both stated and operating, need to be consistent, promoted at every opportunity, and lived by example by all soldiers. Army culture must be examined and re-examined to ensure the elimination of any individual, group, or organizational barriers which prevent or degrade opportunity, fairness and equity for all regardless of race, ethnicity, and gender. The belief that the Army is a reflection of society, and thus will have to contend with the evils of society is unacceptable. America's Army must hold itself to a higher standard and moral ground as the protector of our nation's freedom and democratic way of life.

A major corporate lesson learned is to avoid what is called "benign neglect" where diversity issues are given less priority by management due to other competing projects that are thought to be more important and pressing business issues. 57 Additionally, advocates of diversity in the private sector suggest auditing the corporate culture, one of ten guidelines for managing diversity. 58 An audit of Army culture to determine institutional ways and means for ensuring a supportive value-based environment for equal opportunity appears to have some appreciable merit.

The Army as an Organization. Army organizational sustaining systems and programs aimed at ensuring equal opportunity in recruitment, retention, and promotion tracks with the intent of similar corporate sector diversity initiatives to attract, keep and provide upward mobility for minorities and women. should continue its affirmative actions in tracking and monitoring assessment and communication, recruitment and accessions, force composition, promotions, professional military education, involuntary separations, retention, assignments, discrimination and sexual harassment complaints, use of skills, and discipline. This will be crucial in light of future total force tailoring requirements, down sizing, and decreasing Army budgets. As the Army attempts to manage itself more effectively as big business, it must avoid any unintended consequences of less diversity, especially in the management ranks, as a result of future down sizing, restructuring, or re-engineering.

Army Imperatives. There appears to be several future implications for three of the six Army imperatives--Quality people, Leader development, and Training.

Quality People. A reported shrinking labor pool, increase of women in the labor force, and increased social and political debate in the United States over the issues of women in combat and gays and lesbians in the military give cause for the Army to either strengthen its current position of limited roles for women and exclusion for homosexuals or to eventually open its ranks without limitations. The Army may face increased external

pressure to become more inclusive. Public opinion is changing. In a 1992 Roper national survey of the American public, "44 percent favored and 47 percent opposed the current military policy not to assign women to any direct combat positions."59 The fight over the military ban on homosexuals will continue. Retired General Colin Powell in an interview with journalist David Frost commented "my sense is that the gay and lesbian movement is making progress.... My sense is that in the years ahead, with the courts entering the debate, there may be greater tolerance for some of the gay and lesbian agenda."60 However, recent judicial rulings have upheld the Army's "Don't ask, don't tell" policy. Depending upon one's point of view, the quality of people in the Army, if women are allowed in ground combat roles and if the ban on homosexuals is lifted, will either remain the same, increase or decrease. However, these issues and the Army's current position, for what ever reasons and logic, goes contrary to the ideal of equal opportunity for all Americans.

Leader Development. Leader development at all levels must continue to build support and commitment on the part of junior, senior, and strategic leaders for equal opportunity within the Army. As seen in the corporate sector, diversity can not succeed if not supported by corporate leadership in actions as well as words. A consistency of understanding objectives and policies among leaders expected to carry out and protect equal opportunity within the Army needs to be reenforced. Interesting findings surfaced in a 1995 pre-test survey of Army War College students,

the future strategic leaders of the Army. A racial and gender representative sample of 23 respondents completed a questionnaire on discrimination in the Army in November 1995. The purpose of the survey was to capture their thoughts and opinions on the subject of discrimination and the Army. The results of the survey revealed significant differences of opinion over the merits of the Army's affirmative action policy and existence of institutional racism. Several survey results are listed below:

- -- Black males consistently agree less strongly than White males, White females, and Hispanics that the Army promotes fairness and tolerance and is closer to a "color-blind" society than is the American public.
- -- Black males, White females, and Hispanics agree more than White males that institutional racism in the Army still exists.
- -- 57% of respondents believe affirmative action plans and goals are needed...57% approve of diversity management programs...and 52% believe minority under-representation should be a concern of the Army.
- -- Open-ended comments...affirmative action plans in promotions and leadership positions only lead to less qualified individuals leading...affirmative action can be used as reverse discrimination and, as long as we have it, we are saying to ourselves that we are not equal...it's okay to have goals, but quotas or concise affirmative action based on selecting will hurt morale and undermine the practice of advancing the best qualified individuals...more times than not, the situation [claim of discrimination] is minimized or no substantial action is taken...the more we try to prove to everybody how equal we all are, the more we bring up differences that cause discrimination. The more we actually act like we are all equal without making a big deal of it, the better things will work out.<sup>61</sup>

These findings should simply illustrate some of the misconceptions and surprisingly different perceptions among future senior leaders of Army policies to effect equal opportunity.

Leader development must address and include this area.

Training. The use of minority and women mentoring in some corporate diversity management programs deserves further attention and study. But only in the sense that there might be a better or improved method of leader to subordinate counseling and junior officer and enlisted mentoring, regardless of race or gender. However, such selectively targeted mentoring programs may merit some consideration for use at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) that employ senior R.O.T.C Equal opportunity and sexual harassment training should continue to be emphasized at unit and institutional training courses well into the future. An observation of concern is the lack of any equal opportunity, affirmative action, or sexual harassment training within the Army War College for the student population in general. Army Regulation 600-20 prescribes This regulation also requires it at officer and enlisted basic and advance courses, command staff college, and First Sergeant and Sergeants Major courses, and the Brigadier General Officer Orientation Course. It is imperative that Army leadership from the squad, the lowest level, to the Department of the Army, the highest level, know and embrace the intent of the equal opportunity. This will serve to protect soldiers and create the necessary command climate and environment to maintain a trained and ready Army.

### Summary

Diversity management within corporate America espouses the valuing of employee differences, the management of diversity initiatives at the organizational level aimed at minority and women recruitment, retention, and promotion, and the promoting and adhering to laws that guide or mandate equal opportunity and affirmative action. Corporate America views diversity as a business objective to maintain competitiveness in the domestic and global economies as the U.S workforce grows more diverse in terms of minorities and women in the 21st century. While the private sector can learn many things from the U.S. Army which relate to successful diversity management techniques and programs, there are some aspects of diversity management in the corporate sector that do have implications for the future of the U.S. Army.

It is of great benefit to the Army as it enters the 21st century to closely examine the progress and lessons learned in corporate America as it continues its implementation of diversity management. Because it is a relatively new concept, the jury is still out on the success or failure of diversity management in the corporate sector. However, diligent observations of any alternative approach to equal opportunity in the work place is worth consideration for the possibility of improving and enhancing our Army's ability to maintain a ready and trained and value-based organization in which all soldiers are valued. If soldiers, as the current Chief of Staff of the Army puts it, are

truly our "credentials," then valuing all soldiers regardless of race, creed, gender, or color, institutionally and organizationally and by Army leadership and culture alike, is crucial and of paramount importance.

#### End Notes

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